

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the above-referenced application based on the preceding amendment and the following remarks. Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance.

The Office action mailed August 11, 2004 ("the Office Action"), states that the information disclosure statement filed on July 8, 2004 listed certain foreign references but did not include copies of the foreign references. Applicant has supplied herewith a Communication Regarding Information Disclosure Statement that includes copies of the foreign references.

The drawings are objected to because, according to the Office Action, many parts are informally and unclearly done. Applicant has supplied herewith a replacement set of drawings in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(c).

The disclosure is objected to because of certain informalities. Applicant respectfully submits that such informalities have been hereby addressed.

Claims 33-39 are objected to because there is no indication of what the "method" is intended to accomplish. Applicant has hereby amended claims 33-39 to address the objection.

After entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1-25 and 28-40 will be pending in the application. Claims 1, 28, 33, and 40 are independent claims.

Claims 1, 33, and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 6,358,061 ("Regnier"). Regnier discloses a connector that includes "signal terminals" and "reference or power terminals" (*Id.* at col. 5, ll. 43-6). The reference or power terminals may be used as ground terminals (*Id.* at col. 5, ll. 50-3). By contrast to Applicant's claimed invention, however, none of the terminals disclosed by Regnier may be "selectively designated as either ground or signal contacts."

To the contrary, Regnier clearly teaches that the ground/power/reference contacts do not carry signals (col. 5, l.42 – col. 6, l.6). Therefore, a two-tier application requires a first connector (Fig. 8) and a three-tier application requires a completely different connector (Fig. 9).

According to the claimed invention, however, a contact in the linear array can electrically function as either a signal contact or a ground contact. Therefore, the same electrical connector can be used for a single-ended application or a differential signal pair application. As Regnier does not teach or suggest the invention recited in claims 1, 33, or 40, or any of the claims dependent therefrom, reconsideration of the claim rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 28, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 6,220,896 ("Bertoncini"). Bertoncini discloses a header connector comprising columns of conductors, which may be signal and ground contacts (Bertoncini at col. 2, ll. 44-50). By contrast to the invention recited in Applicant's claims 1 or 33, however, none of the contacts disclosed by Bertoncini may be "selectively designated as either ground or signal contacts." Similarly, by contrast to the invention recited in Applicant's claim 28, the signal contacts disclosed by Bertoncini may not be selectively defined as either one of a differential signal pair or as a single-ended signal conductor.

Specifically, each of the ground contacts in the connector disclosed by Bertoncini is electrically connected to a shield. Slots are formed in the shield at the locations of the ground contacts. Accordingly, the signal contacts cannot be designated as ground contacts and the ground contacts cannot be designated as signal contacts. Bertoncini makes no mention of a signal contact being selectively designated as either one of a pair or as a single-ended signal conductor. Applicant respectfully submits, therefore, that Bertoncini does not anticipate or suggest the invention recited in claims 1, 28, or 33, or any of the claims dependent therefrom. Reconsideration of the claim rejections is respectfully requested.

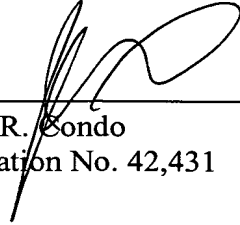
For all the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims patentably define over the cited references. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance for claims 1-25 and 28-40 is respectfully requested. In the event, however, that the Examiner believes that the application is not allowable for any reason, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney to discuss resolution of any remaining issues.

DOCKET NO.: FCI-2714/C3549
Application No.: 10/634,547
Office Action Dated: August 11, 2004

PATENT

Respectfully submitted,

Date: November 12, 2004



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Amendments to the Drawings

The attached sheets of drawings includes changes to FIGs. 4A and 9. The attached replacement sheets, which include FIGs. 1A,1B,2A,2B,3A,3B,3C, 4A,4B,4C,5,6, 7,8,9,10,11,12, 13A,13B,14,15,16A,16B,16C,17,18,19A,19B,20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27, 28,29,30,31,32,33,34A,34B,35A,35B,36,37,38A,38B,38C,39,40A,40B,40C,41,42A,42B, 42C,42D,43,44A,44B,44C,44D,44E,45A,45B,45C,45D,45E,45F,46A,46B,46C,46D,46E, and 46F, replace the original sheets including FIGs. 1A,1B,2A,2B,3A,3B,3C, 4A,4B,4C,5,6, 7,8,9,10,11,12, 13A,13B,14,15,16A,16B,16C,17,18,19A,19B,20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27, 28,29,30,31,32,33,34A,34B,35A,35B,36,37,38A,38B,38C,39,40A,40B,40C,41,42A,42B, 42C,42D,43,44A,44B,44C,44D,44E,45A,45B,45C,45D,45E,45F,46A,46B,46C,46D,46E, and 46F.

Attachment: 68 replacement sheets.